

# MIAMIBEACH



# The City of Miami Beach Joins the Read to Learn Books for Free Program

The Children's Trust and The Center for Literature and Theater at Miami Dade College partner with the City of Miami Beach to bring books to the community

Miami Beach, Florida (February 27, 2014) – <u>The City of Miami Beach</u> has joined the Read To Learn Books For Free Initiative – a program developed by <u>The Children's Trust</u> and <u>The Center for Literature and Theatre @ Miami Dade College</u> with the goal of having all children in Miami-Dade County reading at or above grade-level by the third grade.

Beginning today and throughout the year, ten public Miami Beach locations will have the recognizable green donation bins where anyone can drop off new or gently used children's books. For families with little or no access to books for their children, two new bookshelves have also been established in Miami Beach from which parents and kids are encouraged to take one book home from to read together. A full list of donation bins and bookshelves is listed as follows:

## **Donation Bin Locations:**

- Flamingo Park PAL Building (999 11 St., Miami Beach, 33139)
- Miami Beach Police Station (1100 Washington Ave., Miami Beach, 33139)
- City Hall (1700 Convention Center Dr., Miami Beach, 33139)
- Customer Service Center (1755 Meridian Ave., Miami Beach, 33139)
- 21st Street Recreation Center (2100 Washington Ave., Miami Beach, 33139)
- Scott Rakow Youth Center (2700 Sheridan Ave., Miami Beach, 33140)
- Muss Park (4400 Chase Ave., Miami Beach, 33140)
- North Shore Park and Youth Center (501 72 St., Miami Beach, 33141)
- Fairway Park (200 Fairway Dr., Miami Beach, 33140)
- Normandy Isle Park and Pool (7030 Trouville Esplanade, Miami Beach, 33141)

## **Bookshelf Locations:**

- North Shore Park and Youth Center (501 72 St., Miami Beach, 33141)
- Flamingo Park PAL Building (999 11 St., Miami Beach, 33139)

\*Please note that book drop-off and pick-up is limited to normal business hours for each location. For questions regarding facility hours, please visit <a href="www.miamibeachfl.gov">www.miamibeachparks.com</a> or call Parks & Recreation at 305.673.7730.

Nearly half of Miami-Dade County third-graders fail to read at the basic grade level, and children not reading on level by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. Thanks to the support of partners like the City of Miami Beach, this communitywide campaign aims to change that daunting reality. Read to Learn Books for Free makes books more accessible to children through strategically placed bookshelves filled with new and gently used ageappropriate books in highly visited locations.

"We're excited to serve as a host for the Read to Learn Books for Free initiative, and look forward to encouraging young residents and parents to visit our bookshelves. Developing the enjoyment of reading translates into creating a strong foundation for learning," said Miami Beach Mayor Philip Levine.

"This program is particularly special because it engages the whole community in recycling books that were once cherished by one generation of children so that they may now captivate a whole new generation, but with the very serious goal of helping them reach their full potential," says Charles Auslander, President and CEO of The Children's Trust.

"We are extremely grateful to the City of Miami Beach for their support of the Read to Learn Books for Free initiative. Their participation will help put books into the hands of the underserved children in our community and get them reading for a bright future," said Lissette Mendez, director of programs at The Center for Literature and Theatre @ Miami Dade College.

To support *Read to Learn Books for Free*, call or e-mail us for information about how you can help: <u>Lissette.Mendez@mdc.edu</u> or 305.237.3298. For more information on The Children's Trust, please visit <u>www.thechildrenstrust.org</u>. For more information about The Center, please visit <u>www.thecenteratmdc.org</u>.

Website: http://www.flcenterlitarts.com/site/programs/reading/read-to-learn.html

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/TheCenteratMDC

Hashtag: #ReadtoLearnMB

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#### ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S TRUST

The Children's Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County by making strategic investments in their future through the planning, advocating and funding of quality services.

#### ABOUT THE CENTER FOR LITERATURE AND THEATRE @ MIAMI DADE COLLEGE

The Center for Literature and Theatre @ Miami Dade College promotes reading, writing and theatre throughout South Florida though activities open to all. Its Generation Genius programs for children and teens promote literacy and learning. Its creative writing program has national appeal, with courses taught by local and visiting authors. The Center is home to Prometeo Theatre, the nation's leading Spanish language, conservatory-style program offering training for actors, and featuring performances year round. In 2012, the Center celebrated its tenth year with a renewed commitment to the advancement of literary and theater arts. The Center collaborates with a number of cultural institutions and other partners in South Florida, and throughout the state, to create innovative or theme-based initiatives year-round.

#### ABOUT MIAMI DADE COLLEGE

Miami Dade College has a long and rich history of involvement in the cultural arts, providing South Florida with a vast array of artistic and literary offerings through MDCulture, it's cultural affairs department, including the Miami Book Fair International, the Center @ MDC, the Miami International Film Festival, MDC Live Arts performing arts series, the Cuban Cinema Series, the Miami Leadership Roundtable speakers' series, numerous renowned campus

art galleries and Theatres, and the nationally recognized School of Entertainment and Design Technology. With an enrollment of more than 176,000 students, MDC is the largest institution of higher education in the country and is a national model for many of its programs. The college's seven campuses and two outreach centers offer more than 300 academic pathways leading to baccalaureate degrees, associate in arts and science degrees and numerous career training certificates leading to in-demand jobs. MDC has served more than 2,000,000 students since it opened its doors in 1960.